DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 401 621 EA 028 056

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TITLE Cultural Politics and Education. The John Dewey Lecture Series.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-8077-3503-5
PUB DATE 96
NOTE 149p.
AVAILABLE FROM Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027 (paperback: ISBN-0-8077-3503-5; hardcover: ISBN-0-8077-3514-3).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Bureaucracy; *Conservatism; *Critical Theory; Elementary Secondary Education; Equal Education; Feminism; Free Enterprise System; Higher Education; Ideology; Justice; Liberalism; National Curriculum; *Politics of Education; Poverty; *Power Structure; Social Stratification; *Social Structure; Socioeconomic Influences

ABSTRACT

As the conservative restoration movement gains power in the educational arena, public schooling itself has come under attack. This book analyzes current educational debates and critiques the rightist proposals for change. Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to cultural politics and education, and addresses hegemonic cultures. Chapter 2 examines the most significant proposals for educational "reform" that have come from the neoliberal and neoconservative alliance. The chapter's major focus is on proposals for a national curriculum and a program of national testing. It argues that one of the perverse effects of a national curriculum will be to legitimize inequality. Chapter 3 analyzes conservative ideological positions and how they threaten schools. However, the chapter also demonstrates how the bureaucratic structures and responses of schools sometimes actually create the conditions under which right-wing movements grow and thrive. It incorporates new-Gramscian, postmodern, and poststructural traditions. The fourth chapter examines the social construction of dropping out as a problem and situates it within the real economy. It presents students' accounts of their educational experiences and encounters with the realities of the free-market economy. Chapter 5 presents a conclusion to the work. An index is included. (Contains 145 references.) (LMI)

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